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UNCLAS HARARE 002210

SIPDIS

USAID/W FOR DCHA/OFDA FOR HAJJAR, HALMREST-SANCHEZ
BRYAN, KHANDAGLE AND MARX
DCHA/FFP FOR LANDIS, BRAUSE, SKORIC AND PETERSEN
AFR/SA FOR POE AND COPSON
AFR/SD FOR ISALROW AND WHELAN
STATE FOR AF/S DELISI AND RAYNOR
NAIROBI FOR DCHA/OFDA/ARO FOR RILEY, MYER AND SMITH,
REDSO/ESA/FFP FOR SENYKOFF
GENEVA PLEASE PASS TO UNOCHA, IFRC
PRETORIA FOR USAID/DCHA/FFP FOR DISKIN AND FAS HELM
ROME PLEASE PASS TO FODAG

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [EAID](#) [PREL](#) [US](#) [ZI](#)

SUBJECT: ZIMBABWE FOOD SWAP AGREEMENT SIGNED

REF: Memorandum of Understanding between

Government of Zimbabwe Ministry of Public Service,
Labour and Social Welfare and Grain Marketing Board
with United Nations - World Food Programme executed
on 16 September 2002 (copy faxed 9/29/02)

1. This is to confirm that the ref. Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for the long-planned swap of 17,500 Metric Tons (MT) of U.S.-source whole kernel corn/maize donated to the World Food Program's Emergency Operation (EMOP) appeal for Zimbabwe with an equivalent amount of corn/maize from Government of Zimbabwe (GOZ) stocks was finally signed by all concerned parties on 27 September 2002. [Note: The final document indicates that the GOZ's Ministry of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare signed the MOU on 18 September 2002, confirming that the Ministry of Lands, Agriculture and Rural Resettlement's parastatal Grain Marketing Board was, indeed, the long-standing obstacle to completing this agreement. End Note.] WFP sources indicate that the wheels are already in motion to implement this agreement in a timely manner; however, it is still expected that it will take at least several weeks to complete.

2. Comment: The Mission views this as a most welcome, albeit late, development in addressing the issue surrounding U.S. biotech-derived food aid for Zimbabwe. If completed successfully, without major mishap, it should help considerably to alleviate fears, build mutual confidence and overcome future country (and even greater regional) reticence on this issue. However, the Mission cautions that as a one-off deal, this arrangement does not represent a long-term solution to this issue. Continuing concerns regarding the GOZ's ability to maintain adequate maize stocks suggest that other/additional measures will be required to effect a more lasting solution to this issue in Zimbabwe. End Comment. Sullivan